

CONTRACT INTERPRETER AND TRANSLATION SERVICES CERTIFICATION OF INTERPRETERS & TRANSLATORS

Introduction:

State departments should ensure that all contract interpreters and translators are qualified to provide the requested service. The SPB has developed some sample minimum qualifications for interpreters and translators:

Minimum Qualifications I

- (1) All interpreters and translators, as applicable, have been tested and certified by a professional organization or association recognized as qualified by the industry; and
- (2) All interpreters or translators, as applicable, possess a valid certification (expiration date has not elapsed) that specifies the language(s) and is appropriate to the service(s) to be performed (Interpretation and/or translation); and
- (3) The certification issued was as a result of the administration of a competency test to measure the interpreter and/or translator's level of skill, in the applicable language(s); and
- (4) Documentation is provided that certifies the interpreter has engaged in continuous education training that includes grammar, pronunciation, etymology, improvisation techniques, ethics and cultural awareness; and
- (5) All interpreters and translators have a minimum of two years of professional experience performing interpretation or translation services.

or,

Minimum Qualifications II

- (1) When required by law, all interpreters and translators, as applicable, possess the required qualifications as stated in the statutes pertaining to the service. All interpreters utilized in legal/court proceedings, state administrative and medical hearings should possess valid (expiration date has not elapsed) certification issued by the Cooperative Personnel Services. Certification standards set forth by the Cooperative Personnel Services which include the ability to meet minimum performance standards in consecutive and simultaneous interpretation plus the ability to perform sight translations of written documents, and knowledge of correct usage of legal terminology.

Or,

Minimum Qualifications III

- (1) In instances where a contractor self-certifies/tests its interpreters and/or translators, the contractor must substantiate the following information:

Interpreters:

For all interpreters, the contractor certifies:

- (a) Information is maintained that specifies how the interpreter's language fluency was verified/tested;
- (b) The date interpreter's fluency was verified/tested is maintained on file;
- (c) Documentation is available that identifies the language(s) in which the interpreter is qualified to interpret;

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- (d) Documentation to identify the level of competency verified/tested (e.g., general conversational, legal, medical or scientific) and the score or rating assigned to identify the interpreter's level of fluency;
- (e) Documentation that certifies the interpreter has a minimum of two years of professional experience using a wide range of vocabulary and language skills; and
- (f) Documentation that certifies the interpreter has engaged in continuous education/training that includes grammar, pronunciation, etymology, improvisation techniques, ethics and cultural awareness.

Translators:

For all translators, the contractor certifies:

- (a) Information is maintained to verify translator's knowledge of the written language equivalent to that of a university-educated native speaker (baccalaureate level), or continuous education/training and two years experience working for the state, local or federal government as a contracted translator to ensure accuracy of translations using a wide range of vocabulary and language skills that include grammar, pronunciation, etymology, improvisation techniques, and cultural awareness.
- (b) Information is maintained that specifies how the translator's language fluency is verified/tested;
- (c) The date translator's fluency was verified/tested is maintained on file;
- (d) Documentation is available that identifies language(s) in which the translator is qualified;
- (e) Documentation to identify the level of competency verified/tested (e.g., general conversational, legal, medical or scientific) and the score or rating assigned to identify the translators' level of fluency;
- (f) Documentation that certifies the translator has a minimum of two years of professional experience satisfactorily performing translator services in the applicable language; and
- (g) Documentation that certifies the interpreter engages in continuing education/training that includes grammar, pronunciation, etymology, improvisational techniques, ethics and cultural awareness.